

REMEMBERING FORMER PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV

HON. J. GRESHAM BARRETT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, On May 10, 2008, we commemorated the 85th Jubilee of the late President Heydar Aliyev. When Azerbaijan reclaimed independence in 1991, most Americans had never heard of the country. Soon after, the country found itself involved in a war with neighboring Armenia over Nagorno Karabakh, which resulted in one million refugees and 20 percent of Azerbaijani soil occupied by Armenian forces.

Out of chaos, economic turmoil, and questions about the viability of the country's independence, President Heydar Aliyev emerged as the President of the Republic. He was re-elected in 1998, and served until he passed away in December 2003. In May it is the 85th anniversary of his birthday, and it is fit to note the milestones that were reached under his leadership. The first state visit by a President of an independent Azerbaijan to the United States was realized July 27–August 7, 1997. Prior to this visit, little knowledge, understanding or relations between the two countries existed. On August 1, 1997, a meeting at the White House between President Aliyev and President Clinton took place. It was a historic occasion where the two leaders signed a joint declaration that read:

Presidents Clinton and Aliyev agreed on the importance of expanding the partnership between the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan through strengthening bilateral cooperation in the political, security, economic and commercial spheres.

The U.S. also reaffirmed support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. Under President Aliyev's leadership, Azerbaijan emerged as a critical player in the East-West Energy Transport corridor. The early oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Supsa oil pipeline was completed in 1997. Azerbaijan signed over 19 production sharing agreements with international energy companies.

The decision to build the Maine Export Pipeline, MEP, was not an easy one.

Despite great obstacles, Azerbaijan, under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev, and with the support of the United States and Turkey, realized the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline which now runs from the Caspian through Georgia to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan. This pipeline helps to guarantee Azerbaijan's independence and support of pro-Western foreign policy, provides energy resources to U.S. allies like Georgia and Turkey.

The late President Heydar Aliyev was a strong friend of the United States. Azerbaijan was one of the first countries to offer unconditional assistance to the United States after 9/11, and sent troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. President Aliyev's significant contributions to the country of Azerbaijan provided a fertile ground for the seeds of democracy to flourish after Soviet rule, and have paved the road for Azerbaijan's regional and international success.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF EARL MORSE

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, I along with Mr. HOBSON rise today to recognize Mr. Earl Morse, an Ohioan who has dedicated himself to honoring World War II veterans from across the country by making it possible for them to visit the national memorial built and dedicated in their honor.

Mr. Morse is a physician's assistant and a retired Air Force captain from Enon, Ohio. While working at the Department of Veterans Affairs, he realized that most of the veterans he took care of were not able to make the trip to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. Since Mr. Morse was also a pilot, he offered to personally fly one of his patients to visit the memorial.

Upon realizing the desire to visit the memorial was so great, Mr. Morse started to ask for help from other pilots to make these trips a reality. During an aero club meeting in January of 2005, he outlined a volunteer program to fly senior World War II veterans to visit their memorial with no cost to the veteran. The pilots would be asked to volunteer the use of their aircraft and their time. After Mr. Morse spoke, 11 pilots who had never met his patients signed up to establish the first of what would be many "Honor Flights."

In 2005, the Honor Flight program took 137 World War II veterans to visit their memorial. As the popularity of the program grew, the need for more volunteers and the use of commercial aircraft became necessary. By 2006, an estimated 300 Ohio veterans made the trip to visit the World War II Memorial.

The mission and ideals of Mr. Morse's Honor Flight soon spread across the Nation, and a network of community leaders and volunteers became established to form the Honor Flight Network. The program presently has 69 hubs in 30 States, and is working to establish hubs in all 50 States by the end of 2006.

Madam Speaker, on the eve of Memorial Day, we feel that it is only fitting to pay tribute to Mr. Morse, who has demonstrated his patriotism and his respect for a generation of men and women who sacrificed so much to ensure the security of this world, and to guarantee the freedoms that we enjoy today.

We thank Mr. Earl Morse for his outstanding effort to honor the legacy of one of our Nation's most valuable resources, our veterans. We wish him, and his organization, all the best with his continued effort to ensure his objective is completed.

HONORING MARILYN SPIEGEL

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Madam Speaker, today I stand to recognize an outstanding public servant in my district. She is a woman who has dedicated her life to not only raising her own three children, but also teaching and nurturing many children in her community. I wish to rec-

ognize Marilyn Spiegel, who was recently named Teacher of the Year in the San Juan Unified School District.

As a sixth grade teacher at Earl Le Gette Elementary School, Marilyn has touched countless lives, both directly and indirectly. She began teaching in 1998 after a successful career as a professional chemist and parasitologist. After being an active parent volunteer in her sons' classrooms, she decided to obtain a teaching credential and share her passion for science with students. Voluntarily and independently, Marilyn developed a creative energy program designed to enhance a student's understanding of science and the environment through innovative teaching ideas. In the last six years, she has secured nearly \$30,000 in educational grants for her energy education program. This program has inspired students to examine the role of energy in our Nation and how it relates to their individual lives. Unselfishly, Marilyn continues to share her grant information and educational program with teachers from other schools.

In her spare time, Marilyn serves on the San Juan Unified School District's science adoption committee and the California Department of Education's content review panel for the STAR exam. She is also an active member of the Le Gette teacher/student guitar ensemble, and continues to offer before-school, after-school, and lunch-time tutoring.

Marilyn has earned praise from students, parents, and colleagues for her inspirational style of teaching. In fact, the Teacher of the Year Award process begins with a parent nomination. She sets clear boundaries for the children and reinforces positive behavior through praise. "I treat students with respect, I hold them accountable, and I challenge them," wrote Marilyn in her application. "I do not accept wasted time and talent. I celebrate their success and help shoulder their disappointments and sorrow." Marilyn has the ability to motivate students beyond their natural abilities and helps them reach their greatest potential.

As we continue searching for ways to better the educational system, we need to look at the positive things happening in schools across the country. I believe that Marilyn Spiegel is an excellent example of what is right with America's schools. Congratulations to my friend Marilyn Spiegel, the San Juan Unified School District Teacher of the Year.

NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 19, 2008

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in support of H. Con. Res. 334, honoring the Armed Forces of the United States of America during "National Military Appreciation Month." During this month, we Americans honor and recognize all the military members who serve and have given their lives in defense of the freedoms we enjoy today. This bill recognizes those on active duty in all branches of service, the National Guard and Reserves, retirees, veterans, and all of their families.